

**Written Testimony Supporting  
Proposed House Bill 7285  
An Act Concerning Complaints That Allege Misconduct By Law Enforcement Agency  
Personnel**

Senator Doyle, Senator Kissel, Representative Tong, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Elizabeth Maloney. I am here to offer testimony in support of Proposed House Bill 7285. I am a student of a Justice and Law Administration program at a Connecticut state university and an aspiring law student. My professors, my friends, my future coworkers, my fellow classmates, and even members of my own family have been, are, or plan to become police officers. I have the utmost respect and admiration for law enforcement. My hero and role model is my recently deceased grandmother Margaret Maloney; she was an NYPD first grade detective in Queens County. Everything I learned about integrity, class, and strength of character, I learned from her. These, among others, are the reasons I so profoundly support the police.

I would like to be clear that I would never advocate for any legislation that would unduly burden the police or impede their ability to do their work effectively.

With that said, I want to offer testimony that is supportive of Proposed House Bill 7285. This bill supports the obvious notion that Connecticut has a system for reporting complaints that needs a lot of work. Further, it acknowledges the breakdown of some of the measures that have been put in place to hold law enforcement officers accountable. It is with a small amount of pride but mostly contempt that I report that *my* university police department (Western Connecticut State University) is the only department in all of Connecticut who was in full compliance with complaint form accessibility practices. This is unacceptable. Officers are among a small group of individuals who have the power to take away one's liberty. That power should not go unchecked. It is only fitting that there be measures in place to accept, investigate, track, and record complaints.

For as much as I support the police, I equally support the right of citizens to redress grievances against the police in a meaningful, effective, and accessible way. I believe it is in this way, and through encouraging productive discourse, that we may improve community relations with police and protect officers and citizens alike.

There shouldn't exist any substantial barriers to making legitimate complaints of police misconduct. It is part of the nature of a discretionary, human system that there will be occasional incidences of misconduct. Consequently, there needs to be a way to freely make reports when those incidences occur. That is why I support Proposed House Bill 7285.

It is my belief though, that this bill is incomplete. I support the intent and spirit of the proposed bill. However, I believe it would better suit the needs of our communities if it were to include provisions that establish penalties for noncompliant agencies, as thus far there hasn't been any recourse for members of the public who have been denied the opportunity to make complaints.

Additionally, if law enforcement agencies were required to track and annually report data regarding police complaints, then it would improve the transparency in the policies and likely more aptly serve the legislative intent behind this bill. Further still, I think standardizing complaint forms and offering them in multiple languages is the best way to fairly and inclusively reach the most members of the community.

This bill would have my full support were it to include such provisions. I would implore members of this committee to support and amend House Bill 7285. Thank you for allowing me to testify.

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